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X-Sender: jfos@sunset.backbone.olemiss.edu
X-Mailer: QUALCOMM Windows Eudora Light Version 3.0.6 (32)
Date: Thu, 08 Jun 2000 09:54:17 -0500
To: dmnews@olemiss.edu
From: Judy Fos <jfos@olemiss.edu>
Subject: My letter to the editor in today's paper
Cc: thompsonms2nd@mail.house.gov, roger.wicker@mail.house.gov,
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I was glad to see my letter to the editor in today's Daily Mississippian; however, the "meat and potatoes" part was left out. While I am not an attorney, nor do I pretend to know all the legal issues thereof, this feels like censorship to me. I may be wrong. I thought that letters to the editor were personal opinions and were to be printed as written by the individual whose name appears at the bottom of the letter. When my name appears at the bottom of printed material, such as a letter to the editor, that says that it is MY opinion. You cut out over 2/3 of MY opinion.

I ask you. Why do ONLY sentences 1,5,6,7,8,11,12,28,29,31,33,and 35 appear in my letter? Where are the remainder of the 42 sentences? In paragraph one of my original letter, 5 complete sentences were left out. In paragraph two of my original letter, 4 complete sentences were left out. In paragraph three of my original letter, 12 complete sentences were left out. In paragraph four of my original letter, 2 complete sentences were left out. And in paragraph five of my original letter - it was completely ignored - absolutely none of it was printed!!!! If my letter needed shortened for purposes of space within the newspaper, you should have sent it back to ME so that I could edit it MYSELF since it is supposedly MY letter. Instead you chose to delete much of the "meat and potatoes" of MY letter.

I should be allowed to have MY say. I am forwarding a copy of this email to everyone who has called me about my letter so that they can see my entire message which should have been conveyed by your newspaper. I am also forwarding a copy to the people I copied on my original submission as well as others who knew about my letter being submitted for publication. I want everyone to know my TOTAL opinion, not just the SUGAR-COATED parts that your newspaper decided to print.

The following is a copy of my original letter to the editor:

The issues raised by Deborah Lemmons, the guest columnist, in the June 2, 2000, Daily Mississippian have concerned me for quite some time. I can't believe that there are no concerned individuals, alums or members of this community, who would be willing to share the wealth with staff here at Ole Miss. Hey, our cause could be a nice tax write-off at the end of the year!

What about all the money which was raised in the Campaign for Excellence or by the Foundation? If you check out the webpages of the Foundation, you will see a pie chart. Faculty support is listed; however, staff support is noticeably absent from the pie chart. Was this just human error or was support staff completely left out intentionally? Where is our piece of the pie? Tuition is probably going up for fall. Why can't these funds be used to go into a pool for staff salary increases as a one-time deal this year?

If we don't receive raises this year, many of us will be at or below poverty level. Many employees leave this 40-hour a week job to work at another job just to pay the bills. Let's face it - the prices of everything continue to rise, yet we didn't even get a cost of living raise to offset this increase. As with many other support staff members, I am faced with trying to make a decision of whether to go work at a second job, leaving almost no time for my children or my church, just to keep ahead. If not, I will have to make a big cut in my budget, which now consists basically of only food, clothing and shelter. We work hard for Ole Miss; we deserve some type of monetary reward this year!

I am proud to be a graduate, as well as a staff member of this fine public institution. I love my job, have wonderful co-workers and a terrific boss. Our football team is better than it has ever been and I don't miss any home games. Staff, faculty, students, and alums all bond together as one watching our Rebels fight their way to bowl games! This is all part of Ole Miss and its charm. We have a Chancellor who always speaks to everyone and goes out of his way to make everyone here feel welcome. There are not very many places of employment where someone in such a position of power cares about the "little people". The beautiful campus and the closeness of everyone here at Ole Miss make it a pleasant place to work! It saddens me to even think of looking for full-time employment elsewhere and having to leave Ole Miss and all its Southern charm, but I have to make a living, so this weighs heavily on my mind these days. People, let's face it! If additional funding is not allocated, the only ways to get a raise this year are to either "job jump" or look elsewhere. Surely we are not just nameless faces or numbers. I feel that if the "holders of the University's purse strings" appreciate all that we do, value us as dedicated employees, and really want us, they can find the money for raises somewhere. Monies are transferred from one fund to another for purchases in individual departments, so why can't funds be transferred to support staff salaries for raises this year? Any effort to find funding for support staff members would boost morale tremendously!

If you are a staff member and feel that you deserve a raise, don't just let this issue drop. It seems that the administration feels that renovations and new buildings are more important than actual living, breathing, hard-working, dedicated employees with actual families and children to provide shelter for, feed, and clothe. That really hurts me as I am sure it does most of my fellow-staff members who have also invested time and energy here to make Ole Miss the best it can possibly be. Maybe the administration feels that if they don't respond the issue will "die in the dust" of all the building renovations which are ongoing. If that happens, any chance we have to lobby for a raise will be "gone with the wind."

If you care and are concerned, please send letters to the editor of the Daily Mississippian, your representatives, the administration, alums, and everyone else who might care or be able to help. If you are a member of the administration, show us that you value us, respond. Try to help find a

solution. We would be eternally grateful. The problem is not disappearing and is making many of us feel that we don't matter at all. Show the staff that we do matter and are truly an important part of this institution! Thanks for listening.